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JOURNAL

OF THE AMERICAN VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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Employment of 1989 male and female graduates of US veterinary medical colleges

On the basis of the 1989 AVMA survey of 1,398 graduates of US veterinary medical colleges, it was estimated that 78% of the graduates accepted positions as private practice employees at a mean annual salary of $24,742.[1] This report describes in greater detail the employment choices of 1989 male and female veterinary medical college graduates.

Type of employment

Of the 1,398 graduates responding to the 1989 AVMA survey, 54% were women and 46% were men. Table 1 shows the proportion of graduates receiving offers of employment upon graduation. Excluding graduates entering advanced study programs (graduate degrees, internships, or residencies), 76% of the women received one or more offers of employment, compared with 89% of the men. The percentages are within 1 to 2 percentage points of those reported for 1988.[2]

Regarding graduates who had accepted employment (64%), 97% of the women and 99% of the men would work full time, whereas 3% of the women and 1% of the men would work part time. Of the 16 graduates indicating part-time employment, 11 (69%) were women, and 5 (31%) were men. In comparison with 1988, smaller percentages of women and men accepted part-time positions in 1989.

Prepared by J. Karl Wise, PhD, Wisemark Associates, PO Box 681189, Schaumburg, IL 60168-1189.

*Table 1—Employment offers to male and female veterinary medical college graduates, 1989**

	Male (n = 568)	Female (n = 662)	Total (n = 1,230)
Received ≥ 1 offer (%)	89	76	82
Received no offers (%)	11	24	18

*Excludes graduates entering advanced study programs.

The distribution of female and male graduates was determined according to type of full-time employment (Table 2). Approximately 76% of female graduates accepting full-time employment took positions as employees in private practice. This compares with 80% of male graduates. About 17% of the women, compared with 13% of the men, began advanced study programs.

Starting salaries

Graduates were asked to report their starting salary (on an annual basis) for full-time employment. Table 3 shows that the female graduate's mean starting salary as a private practice employee was $23,944, up 5.9%

Table 2—Employment of male and female veterinary medical college graduates, 1989

	Male (n = 440)	Female (n = 377)
Large animal exclusive (%)	3.6	1.1
Large animal predominant (%)	16.8	3.4
Mixed animal (%)	12.3	12.5
Small animal predominant (%)	8.4	9.0
Small animal exclusive (%)	34.3	45.6
Equine predominant (%)	5.0	4.5
University (research, teaching; %)	1.6	0.8
Federal government (%)	0.5	1.1
Military service (%)	1.4	0.8
State/local government (%)	0.2	...
Industry/commercial business (%)	0.5	0.5
Advanced study (%)	13.2	17.2
Self-employed (%)	2.3	2.4
Other employment (%)	...	1.1

Table 3—Starting salary by type of practice for male and female veterinary medical college graduates, 1989

	Male	Female
Large animal exclusive	$26,856 (16)	$18,625 (4)
Large animal predominant	$26,947 (69)	$24,916 (12)
Mixed animal	$24,407 (52)	$23,434 (44)
Small animal predominant	$24,111 (34)	$23,310 (30)
Small animal exclusive	$25,387 (147)	$24,344 (168)
Equine predominant	$23,470 (21)	$23,035 (17)
All practice types	$25,377 (339)	$23,944 (273)

Figures in parentheses = No. of graduates reporting full-time employment and starting salary.

Table 4—Fringe benefits received by male and female full-time employed graduates, 1989

	Male (n = 440)	Female (n = 377)	Total (n = 817)
Life insurance (%)	24	22	23
Medical/hospital plan (%)	63	63	63
Dental plan (%)	10	10	10
Pension plan (%)	11	9	10
Profit-sharing plan (%)	17	14	16
Disability insurance (%)	36	28	32
Liability insurance (%)	64	60	62
Association dues (%)	48	45	46
Continuing education (%)	69	68	68
Annual vacation leave (%)	82	79	80
Sick leave (%)	49	43	46
Housing/apartment (%)	4	7	6

from 1988. The male graduate's mean starting salary as a private practice employee was $25,377, up 8.5% from 1988. The 1989 mean starting salary for females was $1,433 or 5.6% less than the 1989 mean starting salary for males.

The survey did not secure information on each graduate's responsibilities or hours worked in the new job. Thus, it is not possible to draw conclusions from these survey data about reasons associated with varying salaries between male and female graduates.

Fringe benefits

All graduates were asked to indicate which of 12 fringe benefits would be provided by their new employer. Of male and female graduates who accepted full-time employment, the percentage receiving each of the fringe benefits is in Table 4. The percentages of men and women receiving fringe benefits were similar, although for each fringe benefit, the percentage of men was equal to, or exceeded the percentage of women. Approximately 63% of women and men would be covered by a medical/hospital plan, at least 79% of women and men would receive annual vacation leave, 68% of women and 69% of men would have employer-paid continuing education expenses, and 60% of women and 64% of men would have employer-provided liability insurance. The percentage of men and women receiving fringe benefits increased from 1988.

Characteristics of graduates

Responding graduates provided information on personal characteristics such as age, marital status, and number of children (Table 5). The mean age of females was 28 years, and the mean age of males was 27 years. Regarding marital status, 66% of female graduates were single, 29% were married, and 5% were divorced. Of the male graduates, 57% were single, 41% were married, and 2% were divorced. About 5% of the women and 17% of the men had one or more children. These characteristics are nearly identical to those reported for 1988 graduates.

Table 5—Personal characteristics of male and female veterinary medical college graduates, 1989

	Male	Female	Total
Average age (yr)	27	28	28
Marital status			
Single (%)	57	66	62
Married (%)	41	29	34
Divorced (%)	2	5	4
Widowed (%)	<1	<1	<1
Graduates with children (%)	17	5	11

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1. Wise JK. Employment, starting salaries, and educational indebtedness of 1989 graduates of US veterinary medical colleges. *J Am Vet Med Assoc* 1989; 195:1407-1408.

2. Wise JK. Employment of 1988 male and female graduates of US veterinary medical colleges. *J Am Vet Med Assoc* 1988;193:1569-1570.